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## **Context for Medicare policy**

**ISSUE:** MedPAC's March Report to the Congress includes an introductory chapter that puts the Commission's recommendations within the broader budget, policy, and health care delivery context in which the Medicare program operates. It highlights the challenges the program will face in the future, and the broader economic issues increasing health costs.

**KEY POINTS:** The draft chapter reports on projections of Medicare's long-term financial situation, how Medicare fits within the broader U.S. health care system, and the factors driving increasing costs in both systems.

**ACTION:** Commissioners should provide comments on the scope, substance, and tone of this draft chapter for the March 2009 report.

**STAFF CONTACT:** Evan Christman (202-220-3753)